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Title: Aaron Chronicals 2

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## IT'S MY PARTY AND I'LL SNUB WHO I WANT TO

When Aaron grudgingly  
announced his intention of  
throwing a free feed for  
all the characters in  
Haven, the reaction was  
immediate. All through the  
messy little slum could be  
heard squeals of "Woot!"  
and "Hot damn, grub!"  
Slavering with anticipation,  
several recipients of the  
invitation devoured the  
messengers, temporarily  
deranged by transports of  
gluttony.

Jabbering rumors spread  
through the tatty  
lean-tos of recent  
shipments of whole,  
bewildered oxen, great  
barrels of foamy suds,  
fireworks, tons of potato  
greens, and gigantic  
hogsheads of hog's heads.  
Even huge bales of  
freshly harvested  
stingwort, a popular and  
remarkably powerful  
emetic, were carted into  
town.

The season was cool,  
early autumn, heralding  
the annual change in the  
Havenites' dessert from  
whole watermellons to  
whole pumpkins. But the  
younger newbs who were  
not yet too obese to  
trundle their hulkish  
selves through the  
thoroughfares of Haven  
saw evidence of a future  
treat at the forthcoming

celebration: Fireworks!

As the day of the party  
drew nearer, carts drawn  
by sturdy plow-goats  
rolled through the  
bullrush gates, laden with  
boxes and crates each  
bearing the X-Runes of  
Goodgulf the Wizard and  
various elvish brand  
names.

The crates were unloaded  
and opened at Aaron's  
door, and the mewling  
newbs wagged their  
vestigial tails with wonder  
at the marvelous  
contents. There were  
clusters of tubes mounted  
on tripods to shoot  
rather outsized roman  
candles; fat, finned  
skyrockets, with odd little  
buttons on the front end,  
weighing hundreds of  
pounds; a revolving  
cylinder of tubes with a  
crank to turn them; and  
large "cherry bombs" that  
looked to the children  
more like little green  
pineapples with a ring  
inserted at the top. Each  
crate was labeled with an  
olive-drab elf-rune  
signifying that these toys  
had been made in the  
elf-shops of a fairy  
whose name was  
something very much like  
"Amy Surplus."

Aaron watched the  
unpacking with a broad  
grin and sent the young  
ones scampering with a  
vicious swipe of a  
well-honed toenail. "G'wan,  
beat it, scram!" he called  
merrily after them as  
they disappeared. He then  
chuckled and turned back  
to his shanty, to talk to  
his guest within.  
"This'll be one fireworks  
display they won't forget,"

he laughed and said to Goodgulf, who was sitting rather uncomfortably in a chair of tasteless elvish-modern. The floor around it was littered with 4-letter scrabble arrangements.

"I am afraid you must alter your plans for them," said the Wizard, unsnagging a clot of tangled hair in his dirty-gray beard. "You cannot use extermination as a method for settling your petty grudges with the townspeople." He paused a moment to focus his eyes, which had recently developed a tendency to cross, and looked gravely at Aaron. "It is time to talk of the Ring," he said.

"Ring? What ring?" said Aaron.

"Thee knows only too well what ring," said Goodgulf. "The Ring in thy pocket, Aaron."

"Ooooooh, that ring," said Aaron with a show of innocence. "I thought you meant the ring you leave in my tub after your seances with your rubber duck."

"This is not the time for the making of jests," said Goodgulf, "For evil ones are afoot in the lands, and danger is abroad."

"But-" began Aaron.

"Strange things are stirring in the east..."

"But-"

"Doom is walking the High Road..."

"But-"

"There is a dog in the  
manger..."

"But-"

"... a fly in the  
ointment..."

Aaron clapped his hand  
frantically over the  
working mouth of the  
wizard. "You mean... you  
mean," he whispered,  
"There's a balrog in the  
woodpile?!"

"Mmumffleflug," affirmed  
the gagged magician.

Aaron's worst fears had  
come to pass. After the  
party, there would be  
much to be decided.

COMING NEXT IN  
CHAPTER 3...

Everyone has a blast at  
Aaron's Haven Dinner  
Party thanks to "Amy  
Surplus."